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Validity Study of NIE 71-54:

Probable Developments in North Africa,

published 31 August 1954

1. NIE 71-54 for the most part remains a basically valid estimate. Various paragraphs dealing with the current situation and short-term developments are out-dated in many respects, but to no greater degree than would normally be anticipated as a result of the passage of time. Most of the longer-range estimates cannot be tested at this early date, but so far they appear to be generally accurate.
2. Current developments are tending to confirm the key estimates in NIE 71-54 that: (a) there would be a continued growth in nationalist activity in all three North African areas; and (b) France would probably grant a degree of internal autonomy, first in Tunisia and later in Morocco, but would not fully satisfy increasing nationalist demands. As stated in the NIE, France has sought to avoid concessions which would endanger its strategic control or would destroy the privileged position of the settlers of French descent.
3. However, NIE 71-54 failed to reflect adequately in terms of timing two significant developments over the past year: the early outbreak of nationalist violence in Algeria, and the sharp acceleration of such violence in Morocco. The short-term effect on Algeria of events in Tunisia and Morocco was not given sufficient emphasis in the NIE. Moreover, lacking intelligence on the development of the CRUA, a revolutionary faction within the extremist wing of Algerian nationalism, we did not anticipate violence on the scale of the November 1954 uprising in northeast Algeria. With regard to terrorism in French Morocco, NIE 71-54 did not indicate sufficiently clearly the likely short-term effect of nationalist pressure on the French.

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4. With respect to Libya, much of the background discussion is still basically valid, although various details have become outdated. NIE 71-54 correctly estimated such short-term developments as successful conclusion of the US base agreement and increased friction between France and Libya over the Fezzan. The longer-range estimates might be worded somewhat differently if written now, but we believe they remain generally accurate.

- 2 -

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